

*Keith & Co. 2**

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE
PHYSICAL ENQUIRY

INTO THE
POWERS AND PROPERTIES

OF

SPIRIT, &c.



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POSTSCRIPT

PHYSICAL ENQUIRY

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POWERS AND PROPERTIES

A 2 there are, besides what I have already ready to send, the Parts of Mr. Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, which are valuable with my own; (though I think the World exceedingly indebted to him) A few Comments on them which, although intimately connected with the preceding Treatise, might have yet interrupted the Thread of it, may not improperly as a Postscript be now annexed.

I shall observe little Order in their disposal, but let them down in the detached Manner they have occurred. And, though



POSTSCRIPT, &c.

AS there are, besides what I have already remarked, several Parts of Mr. *Voltaire's* Physical and Metaphysical Doctrines, which are irreconcilable with my own; (though upon the whole I think the World exceedingly indebted to him) A few Comments on them which, although intimately connected with the preceding Tract, might have yet interrupted the Thread of it, may not improperly as a Postscript, be now annexed.

I shall observe little Order in their disposal, but set them down in the detached Manner they have occurred. And, though

though I find, the Commentary on *Mal-lebranche*, one of the Papers I have, in Part, differed from, to be in fact, written by *Abbé Tilladet*, yet, as the same Sentiments recur in some Shape, and often in the very Identical Words, throughout every Volume of Mr. *Voltaire's* Philosophical Works, I have the less scrupled to consider him as, at least their adoptive Owner.

That the extream Caution of the *Academics* is, in general, highly laudable, no true Lover of Science will denie : I cannot therefore wonder that Mr. *Voltaire* should have been so declared an Enemy to mere System and Hypothesis. But, as there are many Truths which, though in themselves undoubted, could yet, never have been established by palpable Experiment or occular Demonstration ; surely, in every Instance where Analogy and fair Inference are, *likewise*, the only possible Proofs to be obtained ; their admission, in such Case, can be no just Impeachment of Philosophical Caution. And as this celebrated Writer himself has, on the
sole.

sole presumption of one hasty Inference, roundly ascribed the *Origin of Evil*, to God's inability of creating a more commodious World! He should have been, surely, more indulgent to the Transgressors against this academic Rule.—How far he was justified in a Conclusion so totally inconsistent with every Idea of OMNIPOTENCE, my preceding Tracts have, I trust, already evinced.

As the seventh Section of *Memmius's* supposed Treatise, is as elegant as it is regular and laboured though erroneous, I have here transcribed it at length.

Quelques philosophes me crient, DIEU est éternel, infini, tout-puissant, il pouvait donc défendre au mal d'entrer dans son edifice admirable.

Prenez garde, mes amis, s'il l'a pu, & s'il ne l'a pas fait, vous le déclarerez méchant; vous en faires notre persécuteur, notre bourreaux, & non pas notre DIEU.

*Il est éternel sans dout. Dès qu'il existe quelque être, il existe un être de toute éternité; sans quoi le néant donnerait l'existence. La nature est éternelle, l'intelligence qui
l'anime*

L'âme est éternelle. Mais d'où savons-nous-elle est infinie ? La nature est-elle infinie ? Qu'est-ce que l'infinie actuel ? Nous ne connaissons que des bornes ; il est vraisemblable que la nature a les siennes ; le vuide en est une preuve. Si la nature est limitée, pourquoi l'intelligence suprême ne le serait-elle pas ? Pourquoi ce DIEU qui ne peut être que dans la nature, s'étendrait-il plus loin qu'elle ? Sa puissance est très grande : Mais qui nous a dit qu'elle est infinie, quand ses ouvrages nous montrent le contraire ? Quand la seule ressource qui nous reste pour le disculper est d'avouer que son pouvoir n'a pu triompher du mal physique et moral ? Certes j'aime mieux l'adorer borné que méchant.

Peut-être dans la vaine machine de la nature, le bien l'a-t-il emporté nécessairement sur le mal, & l'Eternel artisan a été forcé dans ses moyens en faisant encor (malgré tant de maux) ce qu'il y avait de mieux.

Peut-être la matière a été rebelle à l'intelligence qui en disposait les ressorts.

Qui sait enfin si le mal qui règne depuis tant de siècles ne produira pas un grand bien dans des tems encor plus longs ?

Hélas !

* Besides the manifest Arrogancy of asserting that a *Vacuum* must limit the Powers of the DEITY, or bound the Extent of his Creation; to which last, however, no Mortal ever ascribed Infinity: It would be, I fear difficult to establish, even the physical necessity of a perfect general *Vacuum*, much more its actual Existence.

Whether Mr. *Voltaire* was induced by the Triumph to be obtained from exploding the *Descartian* System, or by his just Prejudice in Favor of Sir *Isaac Newton*, so repeatedly to insist on his beloved *Vacuum*, I will not take on me to determine, but, that every physical Advantage which could possibly result from the Admission of it, may be equally obtainable by *Mediums of varied rarefaction*, appears to me as evident, as that it is, probably, the actual Fact; but, so determined an *ante-Descartian* is Mr. *Voltaire*, that (when *Newton* barely hints his Suspicion of an universally pervading Spirit, administering, perhaps, to Light and to Attraction) he, with his never failing Wit (supposing it a temporary Apostacy,) concludes him actuated by that same ill-fated Disposition which could engage even so wise and great a Man, seriously! to comment the Apocalypse.—Though, to be candid, I am not clear if this severe Sarcasm was not drawn upon him by his supposition that the Earth's Moisture would be in time exhausted, by Animal and Vegetable Assimilation.

Whatever has Existence, is *material*, in what Degree soever Subtilized: Whether the Spirit of Attraction, or that of Light be most so, will be a problem perhaps ever beyond the Reach of human Intellect: But, to any one exposed to the focal Ray of a concave Mirrour, the powerful Activity with which Light rebounds from its Surface will as fully ascertain

ascertain its *materiality*, as the Pressure of any heavy Burthen will enforce a most unequivocal Assent to that of *Central Attraction*.

We do not, perhaps, enough consider that we are yet but at the dawn of physical Science: Bacon's Contributions, however, highly extolled, were, at best, only conjectural; and though a very few of those conjectures among the multitude he has hazarded, happened to prove fortunate in the Event, it is to the steady, and indeed giant Strides of a *Galileo* a *Huygens* and a *Newton*, that we are actually indebted for the having (though scarcely above a Century) emerged from almost total Ignorance, on that interesting Subject.—Far then, from restricting Providence by arrogant Conclusions from a *supposed Vacuum*, it evidently appears by the falling of the Feather and Guinea, in the completest *Vacuum* which human Wit can devise, that Motion is in no Degree impeded by the intervention of Light.—That the Spirits of Light and of Attraction may be porous, is highly probable, and as *they* can both, evidently occupy the Pores or Interstices of Air, so may *their* Pores possibly be occupied by some still more subtile Spirit, which may yet leave Room for others unknown to us: And the whole be ultimately pervaded and compleatly filled by the Eternal Essence of the Deity when ever he but wills to have it so; in despite of all *vacuitous* Systems, or of the Conclusions of Mr. *Voltaire*.

That the Freedom of all Motion is proportioned to the Medium which is the Scene of it, no reasoning Man will dispute; the Progress of an Iron Ball propelled by Explosion from a Cannon, though it be soon impeded by any Body of Water it may be directed to, yet is its Passage through the

the thinner Medium of Air on the Earth's Surface sufficiently known to every one; on the top of Etna, it would be probably much encreased, and still more so at the Elevation which our Balloons have already attained.

Upon the same Principle, that Medium in which the Planets move (though so far from being a perfect *Vacuum* that it is manifestly filled with the Spirit of Light and of Attraction) is yet supposed by *Newton* to be of sufficient Tenuity for every Purpose of their destined course; although I readily grant the latter Spirit is but the *Main-spring*, by which God actuates the whole astonishing Machinery:—Little of it do we know as yet, too little indeed, to justify us in any limitation of His Powers: Who can but deride the hasty Notion of a *Vacuum*? From which even the *DEITY* should be excluded! When he reflects that to either Light, Heat, Attraction, or the Electrical Fluid, which are but Spirits of his Creation, nay to three of them at once, every substance whatever, is at all times permeable.

Though the *Abhorrence of a Vacuum* be an exploded and perhaps inaccurate mode of Speech, it appears clearly to me, from the Porosity of every known Substance, and from the extreme Tenuity and Elasticity of Light, Heat, Attraction, and the Electric Fluid, (which though the most rarified Spirits we are acquainted with, are perhaps, far from being actually the most so in Existence,) it appears I say, that a *Vacuum* can no how *Naturally* take Place in any Part reclaimed by the *DEITY* from the Immensity of Space, and once furnished by Him with organized Elements. For, though between this Globe and its Sattellite there is probably one critical Spot where *gravitation*, to either, may be

be so equal, as to be, *betwixt them*, totally suspended, yet, respecting the *great Central Planner*, its Current would remain free as ever, not to mention Light and Heat, whose Passage none but He who made them could in any Instance obstruct.—Annihilate these *Spirits*, and I have done, but while they have Existence, while they continue such irresistible and wondrous Agents! To denie them Materiality, is I think, little better than to dispute the Reality of those Senses on which their Influence and Operation are in Effect so palpable.

That what we now know of Physics is, comparatively, nothing to what we shall in a few Centuries discover, I am fully persuaded; but, that whatever Progress may be hereafter made, in this truly boundless Pursuit, far from contracting our Ideas of the DIVINITY, cannot but tend to their enlargement, and to the clear Confirmation of his OMNIPOTENCE, I not only most sincerely think; but, that our inherent Propensity, and the adaption of our Intellects to such Enquiries, has, in many Instances of the Phænomena presented to them, pointedly that End in View; as, perhaps the only true, although eventual Antidote against that Prostitution and Depravity which the human Passions must have been in general obnoxious to, during the improvident and unconciliating Reign of Ignorance.

Fabric of the World, and evidently means
as Ribs and Struts to the enormous Shell.
I say, that forms the material Part of it;
and surely, nothing can more corroborate
my Idea of the Earth's Vornity. Not
were it hold to its Centre, would these
Ridges

Hélas ! Faibles & malheureux humains, vous portez les mêmes chaînes que moi ; vos maux sont réels ; & je ne vous console que par des peut-être

I will now proceed to differ from Mr. *Voltaire* in his repeated Objections to *De Maillet's* Arguments in support of an universal Flood: though, it would be uncandid not to add that, as a zealous Asserter of Divine Providence, he is, probably, right in his Supposition respecting those extensive Ridges of Mountain which, in many Parts of the Continent, traverse hundreds of Leagues. Instead of being, as *Maillet* asserts, the mere Depositions of testaceous Fragments, accumulated in perhaps a thousand Centuries to such amazing heights. They are, says *Voltaire*, the manifestly providential Contrivance of the eternal Architect, co-eval with the great Fabric of the World, and evidently meant as Ribs and Braces to the enormous *Shell*, *I say*, that forms the material Part of it ; and surely, nothing can more corroborate my Idea of the Earth's *Vacuity*. Nor, were it solid to its Centre, would these
Ridges

Ridges be, as *Braces*, necessary. Though their importance, as Reservoirs for Snow and Rain, from which, fresh Waters after their exhalation from the Sea are, by the mediation of Rivers gradually dispersed throughout the habitable Districts of the Continent, is so clearly manifest, that nothing can more attest divine Contrivance. For indeed, without these Health-imparting Ridges, down whose furrowed Bases the rapidity of the descending Torrent has both excavated the River's Bed, and furnished it with never-failing Supplies of depurated and salutory Waters ; One unvaried Level must (*in true Consistency*) have left no Chasm for the Ocean ; and would, at any rate, have caused such universally stagnant and corrupt Swamps, as must have, perhaps, totally precluded the subsistence of every terrestrial Inhabitant.

That most of the *detached Mountains*, are the Production of Volcani, is as demonstrable a Fact, as it is, likewise, the Opinion of *Maillet*. But, when Mr. *Voltaire* disputes the marine Origin of many Fossils

Fossils described as such by *Maillet*, he is certainly in the wrong. I will set down only two Instances which are too notorious and too *voluminous* to be disputed. One of them is at Bath; where, any Man, walking but an Hour in its *Environs*, will necessarily trample on Specimens of the *Cornu Ammonis*, of at least one hundred pound weight. The other is in the Plains of Agrigentum in Sicily, on whose Surface I have myself observed numerous Specimens of the *Clamp Shell*, a pair of which would, to speak much within Compass, weigh three hundred Pounds. Nor do I believe that Fish to be, at present, a Native of those Seas.

The Existence of these mountainous Ridges, *likewise*, in the Ocean, is a corroborating Proof that *this Species* were not Volcani; and further, that they were meant as Strengtheners to the prodigious Fabric, for, suppose the Ocean dry, the World could be no longer habitable, and, though these be not *entirely* formed by testaceous Depositions, yet I cannot, with Mr. *Voltaire*, *scout* or even dispute the

the Opinion of a Deluge, though I would presume it to have been co-eval with the Worlds Foundation.

How Moses (who seems to have been no deep Speculator in Physical Researches) should have been, yet, informed of it, when it had escaped the Notice of his Predecessor or cotemporary, Sanchoniathon, is not absolutely to the Purpose, nor, would I even ground my Opinion, on the far better Authority of Mr. *Boulanger's* elaborate Compilation of universal ancient Ceremonies relating to the Flood.

The marine Fossils pointed out to us by *Maillet*, and those we accidentally meet with ourselves, are very sufficient Incentives to Enquiry, and the Result of that Enquiry is, that, as immense Quantities of Moisture are unremittingly exhaling from the Ocean; although the far greatest part of it be again returned, by Rivers which lead to it, yet is no inconsiderable Portion assimilated by vegetable and animal Accretion. And in the Event,
* permanently consolidated.

That

* That Substance and Spirit are mutually convertible

That this *fairly Physical* cause will demonstrably account for the *Diminution* of the Waters, for the Appearance of those Mountains which they must *consequently have once cover'd*, and for the marine Fossils so often found upon their Surface; no Man of Candor and Reflection will dispute. Particularly when he adds to this, the prodigious Quantities of Oceanic Water annually assimilated and consolidated in the Bones and Shells of its own natural Inhabitants; not to mention Sea Weed, and whole Islands of Coral in the Pacific Ocean. The annual diminution of the Earth's Moisture by *assimilation*, *Newton* himself admits, together with its eventual Fatality, if not in Time restored by the dense

vertible has been already proved: and that the Waters might by consequence be reproduced I readily admit; but with this necessary Caution, that, a power or natural process which should be constantly productive of this Effect, would have but too strongly militated against that Degree of Permanency *generally indispensable* in the *material* classes of Physical Existence. The preferable supply by Comets, was *therefore* **PROVIDENTIALLY** ordained.

—How unlike *Lucretian Physicks!*

dense and humid Atmosphere of some supervening Comet. The irregular Progress of these enormous Bodies being, as he presumes, providentially adapted to such occasionally necessary approaches.

How far the Summits of the highest Mountains, have, or have not been flooded, could be ascertained only by the examination of them, would their *present* intenseness of Cold permit it.—There might be, perhaps, enough of them originally uncovered, to afford footing and Subsistence for the first Parents of those numerous and varied Beings which now people the terrestrial Globe.—That they *emerged*, as supposed by *Maillet*, appears by no Argument probable, nor indeed, that the whole was covered; for, if the *chief cause* of the Floods reduction, be ascribed, as in our Days; to the Assimilation of *terrestrial* Animals and Vegetables; had the whole been covered, this means of Reduction could not have existed. And though, whatever be consolidated in the Ocean, must much encrease its immense Ridges and its bed, yet would but *one half* of the consolidated

consolidated waters in *this case*, annually lower the Flood, that being nearly the Proportion of the Specific Gravity between Shells and Water.

On the above Principle, which, I think, cannot be erroneous, it would be no difficult Undertaking for a physical and calculating Genious, or for the joint Labours of both, to ascertain, with some Precision, the annual Diminution of the Sea. And, by necessary Consequences, how many thousand years may have elapsed since the Waters were at any given Height, or how long they might still suffice to all the Purposes of their Ordainment.—That they are every Century some-what salter, admits of little Doubt. And, for the Inhabitants of the Earth, there can be no Need of supposing them to have emerged, even had the whole been flooded. Unless we doubt the Power of the Creator, or that, a Continuation of the same Motives which had occasioned his peopling the Ocean, would still engage him to furnish the now uncovered Parts of it, with
Inhabitants

Inhabitants adapted to the Element they were to breath.

Ages, however, (*if all was covered*) must have elapsed before that Moss, which was the first vegetable production of the emerged Rocks, would be, with their Surfaces powdered, and macerated with the accidental Wrecks and Fragments of aquatic Animals and of decayed Sea-Weed; and could have produced Earth sufficient for the Reception of *terrestrial* Vegetables: Whose Growth too, must have long preceded the Creation of those Land Animals they were intended to nourish. For though (*conformably to physical Necessity*, that is, the apparent Ordinance of God) the eternal Construction with the *entire* though unfinished Fabric of those Stupendous Orbs constituting the planetary System, must have been all, *in the same instant* formed, arranged, and actuated by one wondrously comprehensive Exertion of OMNIPOTENCE! And that too, at the precise Distances from their resplendent Centre which their respective Magnitudes and gravitating Powers required.

quired. Yet might their superficial Detail (as indeed, our own Globe manifests) be afterwards submitted to the progressive, although, infallible, Effects of Time. And to the merely consequential Development of divinely implanted Properties.

That the human Divisions of the newly created Colonies, in whatever various Climates of the Emerging World, the Deity had planted them, existed many Centuries in a perfectly Savage state, the Report of Travellers (if Analogy may be in this Instance trusted) most amply testifies. And, as we have no very Authentic Documents of human Existence, *even in the East*, extending to a remoter Period than *ten thousand Years*; it seems but fairly presumable, that, if even articulate Speech had yet made any Progress, neither Society, or Arts, though of mere Convenience could have *till then* been much advanced.

The next Object of my Dissention from Mr. *Voltaire* is, that Metaphysical one which in some Degree pervades almost every Article that he has written on. Nor indeed,

deed, can any Consideration be more interesting, than that Faculty by which alone we live, and think and Act: And in the Hope of whose future Existence, are founded our most pleasing Prospects.

That I may both avoid the transcription of so much French, and deliver the strict Sense of part of the sixteenth and the entire seventeenth Section of *Memmius's Treatise*, in rather fewer Words than are employed by Mr. *Voltaire*; I have preferred translating of it.—“Animals, he says, have only *Faculties*, nor have we ought else: it would be *comique* indeed! That when a Fly was swallowed by a Lizard, or a Man by a Crocodile, either of them had devoured a Soul!—Instead, then, of believing the Spirit of this Fly to be a portion of the Deity, should we not rather suppose it a simple Faculty, given with his Existence in common to this Insect, the Monkey, the Elephant, and, no Disparagement to him! Even to the human Being.

The merest Boor has, by some Philosopher, been deemed superior to the most ingenious

ingenious Animal,* I deny it, the Elephant would, in any Market, outsell twenty Fools. But, granting the Man really superior, what could be inferred from it? But, that he had received more Talents from the Deity: Nothing else!

The Divinity, you say, may after Death, perpetuate these Gifts, he may annex the Faculty of Thought to some surviving Part of us.—Be it so, I neither affirm, nor do I denie, for, I can neither prove, nor disprove. But, it is surely, incumbent on him who does affirm so strange a Fact! to prove it clearly. And, as no Man yet has done so, permit *me* still to doubt.

When we are reduced to Cinders, what will it avail us? That one Atom of those Cinders animates some Creature with Faculties like mine. This new Personage will be no more *me*, than the Melon or the Cabage which may have vegetated upon my Grave.—To be unequivocally immortal, *my* Identical Organs, my Memory, and all my Faculties, should be unperishable.

B —Open

* Mr. *Voltaire* forgets the possibility of a Fool's becoming Father of a very Wife and Virtuous Man.

—Open but the Graves, examine their Contents, and trust me, you will find no Documents to encourage, even, the Shadow of such an Expectation."

To this, which is, at least, plain Speaking, all we need answer, is, that, having already given his assent to Proofs of meer presumption, *however strong*, concerning God's Existence. He becomes, in *absolute Consistency*, bound to accept Presumption of equal Force, in Proof of any Axiom, however difficult of Physical Demonstration, which is an inevitable Consequence of that God's Equity, the foremost, as he himself asserts of his indisputable Attributes. And, for the actual Identity of the surviving Soul's Existence, it would, surely, be sufficiently ascertained to each Individual, by the continuation of an unimpaired Consciousness of the respective Passions which had severally actuated them in their corporeal State, and by a clear Retention of the Memory of past Events.

—The Certitude of its Identity is on the same Principle retained, in the Minds of Dreamless Sleepers, notwithstanding that
temporary

temporary Suspension of its Faculties: Nay even the drowned *know themselves*, when revived by the humane Science of a HAWES.

Mr. *Voltaire* is again, clearly in an Error, when he repeatedly asserts (as he says) after Mr. *Locke*, that Free-will is constituted in the actual Power of *doing* all we wish. Had this been given as the Definition of bodily Freedom, who could have disputed it?—Free-will on the contrary, manifestly consists in the unconstrained Decision or Election of such *possibly attainable* Alternatives as are presented to us.—That we may be influenced in our Election by external Occurrences, by the *Habits* of our own Temper, or by our *occasional* Dispositions, is no real Impeachment of the freedom of that Election: Those Qualities of the Mind being so much dependent on our cultivation of it, that, of twenty Men, scarcely two will be alike affected by the same Accident. The Act of Free-will, as *metaphysically considered*, is therefore, but a Decision or Election *uninfluenced by Supernatural Agency*. Whether exerted on
that

that Will, or on the *immediate* Accidents by which it was determined. *Reflection* If it were otherwise, we could be no how answerable for Actions, *then*, not our own. — All human Merit or Delinquency would be, virtually, precluded, and every moral Distinction at an End. — These Conclusions are, I think, inevitable, nor will any Man of Candor appeal from them. Though, when the late Dr. Johnson adopted Free-will as the *Origin of Evil*, he was but little sensible of the very extensive Inferences it led to, he would else, never have so unwarily admitted it. *Reflection* How is it conceivable that so truly discerning a Man as Mr. Voltaire should have said in the very next Volume, "*faire tout ce qu'on peut, c'est exercer sa liberté pleinement. DIEU a fait tout ce qu'un DIEU pouvait faire.*" Thus lamely do they exculpate the Deity! From ill Intentions in the Permission of Evil. *Reflection* Hobbs (Mr. Voltaire says in his thirty-sixth Volume) had almost demonstrated to him that Compassion was a Virtue of mere Convention, but, having at length found his

his Error ; in the Face of Mr. Locke's Refutation of innate Ideas ! (which he yet much approves) he proceeds in declaring it to be mere Instinct. B / I here are his Words. "*Le Sentiment de la Vertu a été mis par la Nature dans le cœur de l'homme, comme une antidote contre les poisons dont il devoit être dévoré.*" — I have been as much an Advocate for Conscience as any Man, but I make no doubt that, however prevalent it may be, when unassailed by interested Motives, yet must Compassion, and every other Virtue (to have a generally beneficial Effect) be, by assiduous Cultivation, rendered *habitual*: And that it is in fact, but the Result of Reason: For, the human Race having by *Experience* found, that Virtue (that is, such *habitual Inclinations* as might suffice to counter-act many self-interested Views, which had been else fatal to Society) would be a beneficial Check; wisely instituted the rigorous and early Inculcation of it; as, perhaps, the very first Bond of their social Engagement. And indeed without it, how could Society have subsisted? — So far is it from being

a *natural* Antidote against the Evils with which Providence is so rashly charged! That, when I reflect on our inherent and universal Fondness of Executions and other atrocious Sights, together with the horrid Massacres that have so often disgraced Humanity, when I find that Pity has, among Savage Nations, nothing but a barely social and political Relation: That the Torments of a brave and irreproachable Enemy, are even exhibited among them as a public Festival: And that the Instinctive Tribes, know not Compassion. Tho' I once, myself in some Degree admitted its *natural* Influence, I cannot, on more close Reflection, but doubt of its Existence, excepting as the mere Result of Reason, and of social Habit, contracted, and that imperfectly, by very early Cultivation.—Prejudice and involuntary Affection are but too often mistaken for it; Parental Fondness is manifestly innate at first, and afterwards habitual. These however, and all other Virtues, far from being less actual or less meritorious by being conventional and acquired; are for that very Reason, obviously

obviously entitled to even enhanced Estimation.—The potent Habits of Social Intercourse are such, that, from the very Moment our implanted *Aptitudes* to Speech were actually developed, the *sophistication* of mere *Nature* must in some Degree have shortly followed.—Shakespear, who often is my Oracle, who was very little known to Messrs. *Hume* or *Voltaire*, and I fear imperfectly, even to *Johnson*, who not only speaks *Nature's Language*, but, to use his own Expression, *shews her Thoughts*, and indeed, unveils their inmost *Motives*; who may be fairly said to have *cross-examined* her, and traced her genuine Feelings through every Disguise; justly makes the undeceived Lear, declare her to be *sophisticated* in all but *poor mad Tom*, then, intended to present the truest Copy of her original Vagaries that any Man who had not visited the mute Savages of the *Lunar Mountains* could possibly obtain.

For the following Hint, I most thankfully acknowledge myself indebted to Mr. *Voltaire's* letters of *Memius to Cicero*, which, of all his philosophical Writings (if they

be his) appear to me intended as his *Profession de Foi*. I cannot, however, reflect without Astonishment, that a Genius so truly great and good, should have so often stopped or turned aside, when on the very Verge of the most pleasing and consolatory Inferences.

That *our* Ideas have no Means of Entrance into the Mind, but through the mediation of the five Senses, I readily admit, but, when the Lodgement is once made, though we be afterwards deprived of those Senses, yet, says Mr. *Voltaire*, will the combined Imagery, to which they had so liberally administered, be in no Degree obliterated by their Absence.—The vigorous, elegant, and enlightened Minds of *Homer* and of *Milton*, afford two very unequivocal, although *partial* Instances of this ingenious Observation.

How far Exemption from universal Palsy, could be compatible with total Loss of Feeling, I will not take upon me to decide; but, that the reasoning Intellect can actually, and even Vigorously exist, under a Privation of the other four Senses, the
super-

superadvention of a severe Cold, to any Man already deaf and blind, would but too easily evince.

In the Commentary on *Mallebranche*, it is said by *Abbé Tilladet*, and often repeated by *Mr. Voltaire*—"The animal being endued with five Senses for his Information, would God? Contrary to all Precision or OEconomy, superfluously fix a *little Being* in his Brain, which, although immaterial, is yet! Supposed to be affected by the Report of these Senses, to decide in Consequence, and then, actuate the Limbs: Is this taking the nearest Road?"

Yes, the very Argument with which you have yourself furnished me, proves sufficiently that, when, through the Mediation of the five Senses, my Ideas are once admitted, combined, and arranged; the accidental Privation of those Senses (however justly to be regretted) is yet, no longer fatal to Reflection:—That this *little Being* (incongruous as you may suppose it) asserts, then, a very essential Department in the Human Frame. And, that it is enabled by this very Desertion of the Senses, clearly

clearly to Demonstrate, what, without it, could be but Inferred, viz. That the *Reception and Combination* of that varied Intelligence communicated by the Senses, could not, consistently with the acknowledged Providence of God, be committed to the very *precarious Existence* of either of these Senses in particular; and that the Imagery resulting from that Intelligence, is, in their Absence, evidently retained by its real Receiver, this disputed **LITTLE BEING**, in his *now unequivocal Character* of Intellectual President.

While we persist, absurdly to ascribe *perceptive Powers*, or indeed, whatever possible Mode of Existence, to *Immateriality*! The Mazes of metaphysical Error, will obviously continue inextricable. Spirit is demonstrably Matter Subtilized, not *annihilated*! For, it is even again reducible to Matter.—Annex but just Ideas to it, and, having *SOMETHING then* to reason on, this Argument, though metaphysical, may be fairly put to Issue.

That the Tenuity of Spirit, is the very Reverse of any impeachment of its Active Powers,

Powers, even palpable Experiment evinces: And I need scarcely add that, *that which acts, is acted on*. — The next Question is, I admit, only solvable by Inference; is Spirit susceptible of intellectual Organism? To this I say; do we acknowledge a Divinity? If so, the *Spirituality* of his Essence will be, I trust, no more disputed, than his Existence.

That the actual Nature of the Divine Essence can be in any clear Degree conceivable to *created* Intellect, however freed from all corporeal Impediment, is I think little probable. The vast Disparity would still remain, it would be still *finite* to INFINITE. But, that it *is* Spiritual, however it be constituted, and, that all Nature yields to its coercive Powers, is alone ample Answer to our Problem.

That a totally imperceptible and yet highly active Spirit may *unblendealy* pervade the human Frame, has been already proved:—That such a one is absolutely necessary to Thought, the occasional desertion of the corporeal Senses clearly shews:—That one, analogous (in its im-
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perceptibility) to the Electric Spirit, may be susceptible of Intellectual Organism, is, from the acknowledged Spirituality of God, sufficiently apparent: And, as, we are justified by many fair, and pleasing Inferences in the *Belief* of a *presiding human Spirit*; why may not the above Chain of, *I think*, just Conclusions, be recognized as *Demonstration* of its Existence.

Though the Processes of Chemistry afford many surprising Instances of the Convertibility of Matter, yet, when we compare those Changes effected by the Furnace, with the amazing ones of Vegetable and Animal *Assimilation*; the Impotence of human Art is, perhaps, in no other speculative Light so glaring — When we consider that the vegetative *Germe* is scarcely one hundredth Part of each individual Seed: And when we reflect that the *assimilative Powers* of these mere Atoms! Can, in their respective Classes, increate or convert a *colourless and tasteless Liquid* which is the *sole Pabulum* of All, into the Magnitude of the Oak and the solidity of the Ebony, paint it with every Tint which is refracted through

through the Prism, and furnish it with every Taste or Odor that can gratify Appetite or Sensuality: When we again find *these*, after such Astonishing Transmutations, in *their turn* re-assimilated by the equally diminutive *Germe* of Animals, in all their Changes and Gradations, till they at length reach Rationality. When we contemplate such endless Wonders, knowing *their Basis to be but one simple Lymphic Element*, shall we not term *that* which wrought them, a GOD-ASSERTING FACULTY.

This whole Postscript being professedly, but a Rhapsody, whether Physical or metaphysical, I have the less scrupled to indulge myself in the latter Parts of it, as they may, (however Summary) by habituating our Minds and fixing our Attentions to such astonishing though real and visible Wonders, more effectually familiarize them to a Comprehension of that *reasoning Spirit* rejected by Mr. Voltaire, whose repugnance to all admission of it, must have been principally caused by his ascribing *Immateriality* to every Idea of Spirit,

Spirit, by not reflecting on the very *Active Powers* that even Experiment manifests in various Spirits, though of *matereal* and instantaneous Production, and, on the obvious possibility of Spirit being intellectually organizable by the Deity.

That the *little Being* which these Gentlemen have so jocularly seated in the Brain, has the same Residence actually allotted to him by the SUPREEM BEING. Is, I think, little to be doubted; for, nothing is more demonstrable than that the Nerves, which are the acknowledged Conduits of every Sense, are (however infinitely ramified throughout the whole corporeal Frame) evidently but continuations of the *medullary Substance*, or whiter parts of the *Cerebrum* and *Cerebellum*: Which, having, besides, no department in the animal Economy excepting the supply of nervous fluids, and perhaps, restorative ones, *during sleep*, are but the more aptly fitted for the seat of Thought: To which, every Sense is, from every extremity, almost every Instant flying with Intelligence.

I most cordially assent to Mr. *Voltaire's*

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Supposition that a presiding Spirit (admitting its Existence) may be equally the Lot of every Animal whatever : Nay more, that *their* Spirit is, by the Divine Gift of Instinct or innate Sagacity, so far superior, in that it is *unerringly* directed to its Destination ; whilst ours, which are manifestly indebted to the five Senses for their Ideas, and to Experience for their Conduct, are, by necessary Consequence, more subjected to Error.—I will go yet further with Mr. *Voltaire*, I will admit this Spirit to have been an actually constituent Part of that very *Germe*, that Atom we have arisen from ;—That they have not only *assimilated* and grown up together, but, that they are *in general* alike subjected to one common Dissolution.

Does this, however, argue against God's Power of ultimately seperating the Spiritual Part of such, as, in the *human Species*, may have merited this *Premiative Distinction* ; in the *human Race*, I say, who, by the exclusive Impartment of *Rationality and Freewill*, are hazardously qualified to MERIT or to ERR : Do the above Concessions, in
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any sort prevent the DEITY's *continuing its Existence*, in an unembarrassed and happier future State.—Surely No.

That a *surviving* Human Spirit *once furnished with Ideas*, may, independent of corporeal Sensations, be susceptible of great Enjoyment; the Dreams of every temperate and healthy Person (in all but one sensual Instance) not only demonstrate, but further, that, although delusive, they are as unequivocal and pleasing as the Reality:—And though these mental Impressions should be varied into the most extensive Imagery that Fancy the most poetical could Suggest; yet are they so totally independent of all foreign Agency whatever, that, an uninterrupted Perpetuation of this Faculty, might by the Deity be extended to Spirit, WERE IT EVEN WITH ITS ASHES ENCLOSED IN ITS URN.—That this conveys, *therefore*, to the plainest Understanding, one easily conceivable Mode of future *Existence* and *Enjoyment*, is alone a Reflection by no means unpleasing: Yet does it naturally suggest another far more interesting.—That, since the human Mind
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(while its Corporeal Faculties were suspended and a sleep) was manifestly unable to combine, or to reflect on any Ideas, but what had entered by the Senses, or had been familiarized by Habit and Experience; were the *surviving Spirit*, to be subjected to some analogous Restriction, (which would be but, adapting its future Enjoyments, to its present Notions of Happiness;) and, might we be permitted, by a continued Parity of reasoning, to extend this equitable Inference, in a Degree proportioned to the generous Motives and unrestrained Efforts of Imaginations enlarged by Science and by Virtue, what flattering Prospects and what truly cordial Consolation would not this Idea encourage in every Votary to these *really beneficial Pursuits*:—Far from the delusive Enjoyments above alluded to, their glorious Lucubrations, no longer fruitless Labours! Would be, *then*, in every Sense *condignly* rewarded; and they might justly hope for even more exalted Powers of pursuing, in the true Regions of Knowledge, those Researches they had on Earth delighted in.

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What Mortal more deserving of such a luxurious Destination? Than that very Author, who, though so extensively conversant with the Stupendous Works of the Divinity, and so laborious a Promulgator of universally beneficial Doctrines, could yet (however effectually he has secured his earthly Reputation from it) indulge the gloomy one of ANNIHILATION. Peace be, however, to a *Voltaire's* illustrious Ashes, —his investigating Spirit is by this Time, pleasingly undeceived; and is perhaps *actually* traversing the Realms of Science with the congenial Spirits of those *Trajan's*, *Antonine's*, *Julian's*, *Locke's* and *Newton's*, which were here, the virtuous Objects of his almost Idolatrous Celebration.

Per quos, nunquam jurare pudebit.

F I N I S.